What Does Daniel 11 Reveal About the Antichrist's Rise and Fall in End-Time Prophecy?

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Daniel 11 stands as one of the most detailed and challenging prophetic chapters in the Bible, presenting a remarkable prophetic narrative that begins with historical events of the Persian and Greek empires, then transitions into prophecy that many believe describes the Antichrist's rise to power, his reign, and his ultimate destruction. This study examines how Scripture, when compared with other passages, describes the Antichrist. From some 90 passages in the prophecy having a bearing on the Antichrist's future reign. This chapter powerfully demonstrates God's sovereignty over both history and prophecy. Moreover, we provide a detailed examination of the Antichrist's prophetic progression, highlighting the transition point and showing how Antichrist's historical actions parallel those described in Daniel 11.

Verses 1-4: The Rise and Division of the Greek Empire

The first part of Daniel 11 describes the Persian and Greek empires of ancient times. Now I will tell you the truth. Three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth will be far richer than the others. By the power he gains from his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece. (Daniel 11:2)

The reign spoken of here is the Persian empire, lasting until 331BC/BC. The "three more kings" refer to Cyrus (Cambyses 530-522 BC), Bardiya/Gaumata (522-521), and Darius I (521-486 BC) (Ezra 4:5, 6:14). The "fourth" is Xerxes (486-465 BC), who was far richer than his predecessors and led the famous Persian invasion of Greece (Thermopylae in 480 BC, where Persian forces faced 300 Spartan warriors).

"It will certainly stir up all of the rest of the kingdom of Greece." Xerxes's massive military campaign provoked his religious and his literate, yet proud, Greek subjects to rise against the Persian Empire. Xerxes's military campaign was the catalyst for the Greek Wars (492-449 BC), including the Battle of Marathon (490 BC), the Battle of Thermopylae (480 BC), and Salamis (480 BC). Xerxes's military campaign was the catalyst for the Greeks but to its destruction. It will then be a powerful Greek king who will rule over a vast empire and do whatever he pleases. But his empire will be broken and divided and given to four kingdoms. (Daniel 11:3-4)

This "mighty king" is Alexander the Great (356-323 BC), who swiftly conquered the Persian Empire. His empire was divided among his four generals: Cassander (Greece), Lysimachus (Thrace), Ptolemy (Egypt), and Seleucus (Syria) (Dan 8:8, 22; Dan 11:3). Symbolically (Dan 7:6), and Concordant (p. 1352) (GRC Lexicon), these descendants did not inherit the throne.

Verses 5-20: The Conflicts Between the Ptolemies and Seleucids

The king of the south will become powerful, but one of his commanders will become even more powerful and will rule a kingdom greater than his. After some years they will form an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the south will go to the king of the north to make a treaty. But she will lose her power, and the king will lose his power and crown. She will be given in marriage together with her father and her servants who have been strong enough to help her father. (Dan 11:5-6)

The "king of the south" (Egypt) continues to rule major kingdoms that emerged from the four divisions of Alexander the Great. The "king of the north" (Syria) is the Seleucid Empire, which ruled Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia. The "daughter of the king of the south" is Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, who married Antiochus II Theos (261-246 BC), Ptolemy II's rival. Ptolemy II arranged this marriage to secure peace and alliance between the Ptolemaic and Seleucid dynasties. Ptolemy II's strategy failed, as Berenice's family was ultimately killed.

Then a relative of the king will come from his family to take her place. He will attack the king of the north, who will lose his power and be crushed. He will also take their gods and their metal idols and their valuable silver and gold back to his country. The king of the north will attack the king of the south, but he will be unsuccessful. The king of the south will then be very proud and will kill many thousands, but he will not remain in power. The king of the north will return with a much larger army than before. At the time, many people will be rising against the king of the south. Violent people among your own people will try to make this prophecy come true, but they failed in their attempt. (Dan 11:7-14)

"A relative" refers to Ptolemy III Euergetes, who successfully defeated the Seleucid Empire. Ptolemy III's military campaign was the catalyst for the Third Syrian War (246-241 BC). This victory marked a turning point, positioning the Ptolemaic Kingdom as the most powerful Hellenistic kingdom. Antiochus III then consolidated his control over Asia Minor, Armenia, and Persia, and prepared for a major campaign against the Ptolemies. This preparation was the catalyst for the "Besieged Cities" war, which lasted from 219 to 217 BC. Ptolemy IV Philopator's victory at Raphia (217 BC) was the catalyst for Antiochus III's defeat, leading to the loss of his kingdom and his death (187 BC).

Then the king of the north will come and build mounds and ramps and will take the strongest fortified cities. The forces of the south will be powerless against him. The best troops of the south will be no match for him. He will do as he pleases and will stand in the Glorious Land and have the power to destroy it. He will set his face to rule the whole kingdom and will make an alliance with the king of the south. He will give him his daughter in marriage to try to destroy the kingdom, but his plan will not succeed. He will then turn his attention to the coastlands and will take many of them. But a general from the king of the south will put an end to his boasting and will turn his shame back upon him. Then he will return to his own land and be never seen again. (Dan 11:15-19)

Antiochus III's victory at Raphia was the catalyst for his military campaigns against the Ptolemaic Kingdom. He captured Gaza, Palestine, Phoenicia, and Cilicia, and the Greek Islands. He then consolidated his reign and planned his next campaign against the Ptolemies. This campaign was the catalyst for the Fifth Syrian War (202-195 BC). Antiochus III's victory at Panion (200 BC) secured Syria's control over Palestine, which was a pivotal moment where the prophecy transforms from describing historical dynastic conflicts to introducing a specific individual. Antiochus III's victory at Panion was the catalyst for the Roman War against Antiochus III (192-188 BC). Antiochus III's defeat at Magnesia (190 BC) was the catalyst for the Roman Peace Treaty, which forced Antiochus III to surrender his Hellenistic Empire. This defeated Antiochus III's ability to launch military campaigns against the Ptolemies. Antiochus III's defeat and inglorious and humiliating retreat from Rome was the catalyst for his death (187 BC).

Verses 21-35: Antiochus IV Rises to Power

"A hated Prince will be given power over the kingdom. He will come when it is peaceful and take it by deceit. Many will be fooled by his false promises, but God will destroy them." (Dan 11:21)

Ruling over Israel from 175-164 BC, Antiochus quickly alienated anyone who opposed him, using overwhelming force to crush any opposition. This is why he is called the prince spoken of in Daniel 9:26, "the prince who will come" refers to Dan 9:27, who was the Jewish high priest at the time. Christ was a self-respected religious leader who was not a threat to the Roman Empire. Antiochus IV, the "prince who will come," was a different Antiochus who sought to Hellenize the Jewish people and destroy their religious culture.

This historical scene foreshadows how the Antichrist will similarly use overwhelming force to eliminate opposition and establish his religious tradition. Both Antiochus and the Antichrist will be hated by many, but the Antichrist will attack religious authorities and demand to worship him. Antiochus IV's military campaign against the Ptolemaic Kingdom was the catalyst for the Sixth Syrian War (170-168 BC).

Then an alliance is made with him, but he will act deceitfully. He will rise to power with a small nation. He will come when the country is at peace, and he will seize the best farmlands. He will do what his ancestors never did, even his ancestors and his predecessors. He will distribute among his followers the wealth he has taken from his victims. He will plot against the strongholds, but his success will last only for a time. (Dan 11:23-24)

"Alliance" refers to the Ptolemaic Kingdom, which was ruled by Ptolemy VI Philometor, who was a child at the time. Antiochus IV's military campaign against the Jewish Kingdom of Judea was the catalyst for the Maccabean Revolt (167-160 BC). Antiochus IV's victory at Pelusium (170 BC) was the catalyst for Antiochus IV's second campaign against the Ptolemies. This campaign was the catalyst for the Battle of Eleusis (168 BC), which established Antiochus IV's control over Egypt. This victory was the catalyst for Antiochus IV's second campaign against the Jewish Kingdom of Judea. This second campaign was the catalyst for the Siege of Jerusalem (168 BC), which established Antiochus IV's control over Jerusalem. This victory was the catalyst for Antiochus IV's third campaign against the Jewish Kingdom of Judea. This third campaign was the catalyst for the Desecration of the Temple (167 BC), which established Antiochus IV's control over the Temple. This victory was the catalyst for Antiochus IV's fourth campaign against the Jewish Kingdom of Judea. This fourth campaign was the catalyst for the Siege of Bethzur (167 BC), which established Antiochus IV's control over Bethzur. This victory was the catalyst for Antiochus IV's fifth campaign against the Jewish Kingdom of Judea. This fifth campaign was the catalyst for the Battle of Beth Zur (164 BC), which established Antiochus IV's control over Beth Zur. This victory was the catalyst for Antiochus IV's sixth campaign against the Jewish Kingdom of Judea. This sixth campaign was the catalyst for the Battle of Beth Zur (164 BC), which established Antiochus IV's control over Beth Zur. This victory was the catalyst for Antiochus IV's death (164 BC).

Then he will return to his own land, but he will meet a fierce opposition and be very angry. He will attack the holy covenant. Some leaders will side with him against the holy covenant. They will slaughter, kill, and enslave many people. But God will protect his people, and the wise teachers will be a great blessing. Many people will pretend to be wise, but some of the wise will be tested by persecution and will be purified and made pure. This will last until the end, and it will happen at the appointed time. (Dan 11:28-35)

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Verses 36-45: The Antichrist's Ultimate Rebellion and Defeat

Then **verse 36**, the prophecy focuses solely on the **Antichrist**, whose actions surpass those of Antiochus IV. "The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt himself and think himself greater than any god. He will even blaspheme against the Most High God." Antiochus IV's self-deification and his opposition to the Jewish religion were a catalyst for the Maccabean Revolt (167-160 BC), where the Silver Lychn needs to second above all other beings. This "blasphemy" blasphemy specifically refers to **Dan 8:11**, "He even challenged the Prince who commands the armies of heaven." Antiochus IV's actions will "exalt" the Antichrist's "god" to such a complete extent that he will be worshiped as a god.